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LABOR INFORMATION BULLETIN

VOLUME IV | OCTOBER 1937 | NUMBER 10

Issued by
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS
U. S. Department of Labor
Washington

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
FRANCES PERKINS, Secretary
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS
ISADOR LUBIN, Commissioner

LABOR INFORMATION BULLETIN

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BORIS STERN, Editor

LABOR REQUIREMENTS IN MANUFACTURING COTTON TEXTILES

By
BORIS STERN
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

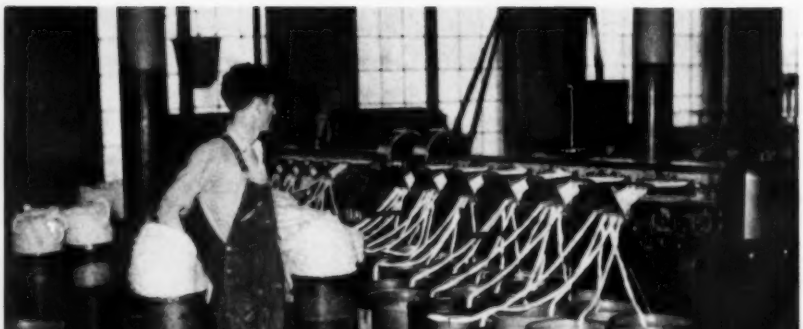
Cotton-textile workers employed in a mill equipped with the most modern machinery available in 1936 could produce one and one-half times as many yards of sheeting per hour as they could with the most modern machinery which was available in 1910. A recent study of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, undertaken in cooperation with the National Research Project of the Works Progress Administration, revealed that during the quarter of a century between 1910 and 1936 changes in textile equipment and machinery made it possible to increase the output per man per hour from 15.80 yards of sheeting cloth in 1910 to 24.56 yards in 1936. This is an increase of 55.4 percent.

Twenty-five years ago a cotton-textile mill, specializing in the production of sheeting, with the most modern equipment then available would have had to employ 855 workers on two 40-hour shifts to produce in one week 541,500 yards of cloth. Under the same management, but with the machinery and equipment available in 1936, the same amount of cloth could be produced by 551 workers. In view of these changes in the methods of production and in the equipment and machinery used in cotton textiles, it is of interest to examine their effects on the amount and type of labor now required in a textile mill as compared with 1910.

The manufacture of cotton textiles consists essentially of the conversion of raw cotton into yarn and subsequently into cloth. The average cotton-textile mill comprises the following major processes: Carding; spinning; spooling, warping, and slashing; weaving; and cloth inspection. Carding cleanses the raw cotton, opens up the matted fibers, arranges them in roughly parallel order and converts the cotton into rope-like form called "roving." Spinning converts the roving into yarn and imparts strength to it by twisting. Spooling, warping, and slashing make the yarn suitable for the weaving process. Weaving combines the lengthwise threads called "warp" and the crosswise or filling threads into the type of cloth desired, and the cloth department serves mainly for inspection and packaging purposes.

Carding. Raw cotton arrives at the mill in large bales, each containing about 475 pounds of highly compressed cotton. Through a series of operations known in the industry as opening, picking and blending, carding, drawing, and roving, the raw cotton is decompressed, freed of all foreign matters and dust, and converted into loose, thick, rope-like strands of roving. In 1910 many of these operations were performed several times on separate machines requiring separate tenders and helpers to move the cotton from one machine to another. With the equipment available in 1936 a number of these operations have been completely eliminated. Vacuum-blowing devices automatically transfer the cotton from one machine to another. In addition, the modern machines are much more efficient than those available in 1910 and require the handling of less raw cotton to produce a certain amount of cloth.

The combined effect of the reduced number of machines required in this department, the automatic flow of the cotton from one machine to another, and the greater efficiency of each machine resulted in reducing the



DRAWING OPERATION CONVERTS FOUR TO SIX COTTON STRANDS INTO ONE

number of workers required in the carding department and at the same time changing the occupational make-up of the labor needed. The number of workers needed to open, pick, blend, card, and convert into roving the quantity of cotton required for the production of the same amount of cloth sheeting in 1936 as in 1910 could be reduced by slightly more than 50 percent. Such workers employed in 1910 as "drawing tenders", "slubber tenders", and "intermediate tenders" were no longer needed in 1936. The number of "card tenders", "strippers", and "roving-frame tenders", could also have been reduced chiefly because fewer machines were required in 1936 and because some of the work formerly done by these operators is now performed automatically by machines.

OCCUPATIONAL CHANGES IN TEXTILE MILLS, 1910-1936

CARDING DEPARTMENT

OCCUPATION	WORKERS NEEDED TO PRODUCE 541,500 YARDS OF SHEETING IN TWO 40-HOUR SHIFTS	
	1910	1936
Total	238	112
Supervisors	12	10
Opener hands	4	4
Waste men	2	2
Picker tenders	10	4
Card tenders and strippers	28	20
Drawing tenders	40	16
Slubber tenders	16	*Eliminated*
Intermediate tenders	26	*Eliminated*
Roving-frame tenders	66	38
Grinders and assistants	8	8
Oilers	6	4
Miscellaneous	20	6

Spinning. This process converts the loose rope-like roving into yarn by reducing its size and by imparting to it a twist which strengthens the yarn for further operations. There have been no radical changes in the process of spinning since 1910, but the spinning frames available in 1936 are supplied with more spindles, which are faster and of a larger size than those which were available 25 years ago. They are also equipped with a number of special attachments which considerably reduce breakage of threads in the process of spinning the yarn. Fewer skilled spinners were therefore required to produce the same amount of yarn in 1936 as compared with 1910. This is also true of the unskilled workers, generally known in this department as "doffers",

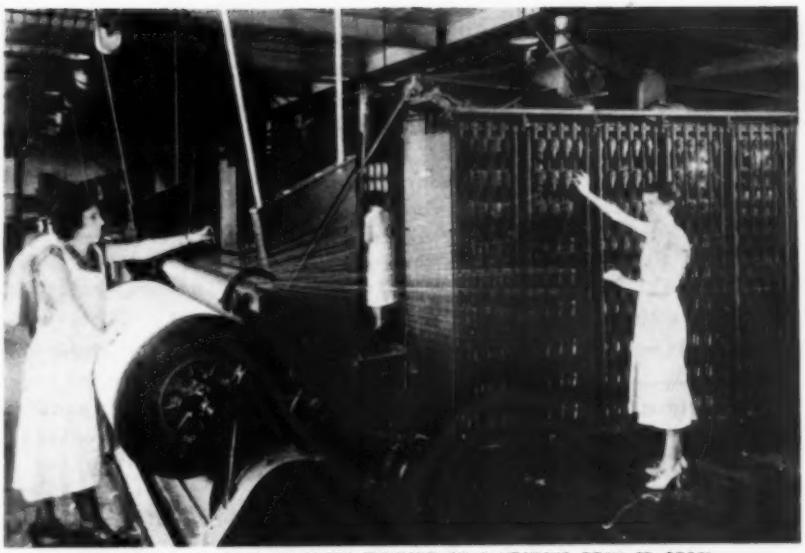
OCCUPATIONAL CHANGES IN TEXTILE MILLS, 1910-1936

SPINNING DEPARTMENT

OCCUPATION	WORKERS NEEDED TO PRODUCE 541,500 YARDS OF SHEETING IN TWO 40-HOUR SHIFTS	
	1910	1936
Total	200	144
Supervisors	12	12
Spinners	112	46
Warp doffers	10	8
Filling doffers	28	20
Oilers	4	4
Miscellaneous	34	54

who remove the bobbins filled with yarn and replace them with empty ones. The total reduction in the labor requirements for the spinning department brought about by the changes in the equipment available in 1936 as compared with 1910 is estimated at about 28 percent.

Spooling and Warping. The bobbins used in the spinning process are too small to be used in weaving. The yarn must therefore be first spooled on larger bobbins or cones and then wound upon a large section beam by a process known as "warping." The machine used in this process is generally called a "warper." The section beams used in warping are big spools holding a large amount of yarn threads wound in strictly parallel order to insure uninterrupted operation in weaving.



WARPING OR WINDING NUMEROUS THREADS ON A WEAVING BEAM OR SPOOL

OCCUPATIONAL CHANGES IN TEXTILE MILLS, 1910-1936

OCCUPATION	WORKERS NEEDED TO PRODUCE 541,500 YARDS OF SHEETING IN TWO 40-HOUR SHIFTS	
SPOOLING AND WARPING DEPARTMENT		
	1910	1936
Total	70	26
Supervisors	2	2
Spooler tenders	46	8
Warper tenders	8	4
Miscellaneous	14	12
SLASHING AND DRAWING-IN DEPARTMENT		
Total	32	20
Supervisors	2	2
Slasher tenders	12	4
Warp-tying operators	4	4
Miscellaneous	14	10

In 1936 high-speed warpers were capable of operating at the rate of from 350 to 900 yards per minute compared with the average speed of about 50 yards per minute in 1910. The increased speed of the warper and the larger-size section beams used in 1936 made it possible for this department to handle the same amount of yarn as in 1910 with a labor force reduced by more than 60 percent.

Slashing. Before it is ready to be used in the weaving department the yarn must be given a bath of starch and softeners in order to make it sufficiently strong to withstand the friction in the loom. This operation is called "sizing" or "slashing." The most modern slashing equipment available in 1910 could process approximately 131 pounds of warp yarn per hour, whereas the 1936 equipment could process more than 325 pounds per hour. The latter equipment has been made more automatic, with the result that the number of slasher tenders required in 1936 could be reduced to one-third of the number needed to process the same amount of yarn in 1910.

Weaving. The process of weaving on a modern loom is essentially not much different from that performed on most primitive looms. It consists simply of the crossing or interlacing of one set of threads called the "warp" with another set called "filling." Automatic looms were used in the manufacture of cotton textiles even prior to 1910. Since then, however, a number of important changes

have been introduced which greatly increase the loom output and make it more automatic. One important change, for instance, was the introduction of stop-motion attachments which automatically stop the loom whenever a thread breaks, thus making it easy to detect the breakage. The work of weavers was also changed so that each weaver could tend more looms in 1936 than was possible in 1910.

The duties of a weaver vary somewhat from mill to mill. Generally he is responsible for the continuous operation of the looms which he tends, for repairing breaks in the yarn and correcting weaving imperfections in the cloth. The work of placing the filling bobbins on the automatic loom, formerly done by the weaver, is now generally assigned to an unskilled helper called a battery hand. Similarly when a large number of breaks occur in the yarn the work of repairing the breaks, also formerly done by the weaver, is now performed by a "smash hand." The latter also starts up new warps after they are put in the loom.

OCCUPATIONAL CHANGES IN TEXTILE MILLS, 1910-1936

OCCUPATION	WORKERS NEEDED TO PRODUCE 541,500 YARDS OF SHEETING IN TWO 40-HOUR SHIFTS	
WEAVING DEPARTMENT		
	1910	1936
Total	238	174
Supervisors	6	6
Weavers	140	44
Battery hands	None	44
Loom fixers	34	26
Oilers	6	6
Miscellaneous	52	48
CLOTH ROOM		
Total	44	36
Supervisors	4	2
Inspectors	32	24
Miscellaneous	8	10

To weave 541,500 yards of sheeting in two 40-hour shifts in 1910 the mill covered by the survey needed 1,692 automatic looms tended by 140 weavers. In 1936 the same amount of sheeting could have been woven on 1,283 looms attended by 44 weavers assisted by 44 unskilled battery hands who would perform some of the work formerly done by weavers. The increased man-hour output in the weaving department made it possible to weave an identical quantity of sheeting in 1936 as in 1910 with a reduction of about 27 percent in the labor required in this department.

Other Departments. In the cloth room where the woven product is carefully examined to eliminate imperfections in weaving, the introduction of high-speed automatically controlled shears and brushing machines between 1910 and 1936 accounted for a reduction of about 18 percent in the labor force. The requirements of power, yard, maintenance, and miscellaneous labor, on the other hand, were actually larger in 1936 than in 1910. The increase was due primarily to the need for more electricians and helpers to handle the increased amount of power used in the plant in 1936 as compared with 1910.

Conclusion. A careful analysis of the changes caused by improved methods of operation and the use of more modern machinery in textile plants in 1936 as compared with 1910 would indicate that on the whole the demand for supervisory labor, such as overseers and their helpers and foremen, has not changed since 1910. Many skilled occupations have been eliminated altogether while the demand for other skilled occupations, such as card tenders, spinners, and weavers, has been greatly reduced. These changes were made possible partly because of the increased efficiency of the machines used and partly because some of the work formerly done by skilled operators can now be performed either by the machine or by semiskilled and unskilled hands. Although the proportion of unskilled help to skilled workers has thus been increased, the total number of workers or the total weekly hours of work required to produce an identical amount of sheeting cloth in 1936 as in 1910 could have been reduced by about 35 percent.

A NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR APPRENTICESHIP STANDARDS

WILLIAM F. PATTERSON, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
FEDERAL COMMITTEE ON APPRENTICE TRAINING

"The Secretary of Labor is hereby authorized and directed to formulate and promote the furtherance of labor standards necessary to safeguard the welfare of apprentices, to extend the application of such standards by encouraging the inclusion thereof in contracts of apprenticeship, to bring together employers and labor for the formulation of programs of apprenticeship, and to cooperate with the State agencies engaged in the formulation and promotion of standards of apprenticeship...."

—Sec. 1, Public Act No. 308, 75th Congress

Improved business conditions and increased employment since 1934 made it clear that some industries would soon be confronted with a shortage of certain types of highly skilled labor. The 1930 census reported approximately 90,000 apprentices as against 6,000,000 skilled workers. During the depression apprentice training was practically suspended, and by 1937 it was estimated that there were only 37,000 apprentices in the United States. This number falls far short of meeting the annual losses in the ranks of skilled workers caused by old age, injury, death, transfer to different employment, and other causes.

The growing need of thoroughly trained workers produced by apprenticeship of high quality has therefore become a matter of concern for the whole Nation. At its last session, the Congress of the United States enacted a bill to promote the welfare of apprentices. As a result of this law, the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training was made a permanent agency within the United States Department of Labor. It was first organized in 1934 to safeguard the interests of apprentices under the N.R.A. codes. Later it became a part of the National Youth Administration and cooperated with the United States Department of Labor, the United States Office of Education, and employer and labor organizations throughout the country in attacking the problem of making apprenticeship serve the needs of some of the thousands of young people who were unable to find employment.

The present objectives of the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training under the provisions of the law are twofold: To guarantee a thorough trade preparation for apprentices, and to help provide a sufficient number of highly skilled workers to supply the country's growing needs.

Standards of apprenticeship cannot be set arbitrarily. They must be developed gradually out of the job situation in each industry through the give and take of both workers and employers. The problem of establishing proper standards of apprenticeship, therefore, involves the cooperation of various Federal and State agencies as well as the cooperation of employers and workers in the industries in which apprenticeship exists or is needed.

State apprenticeship committees have been set up in a number of States. For the most part these committees are made up of representatives of the State labor department, State youth administration State vocational education department, and the State employment service and an equal number of representatives of employers and of labor. These State committees act as a clearing house of information and generally aid in the promotion of apprenticeship standards for their State. A number of local apprenticeship committees have also been organized on a similar basis, to perform for their particular community the same functions that the State

apprenticeship committee performs for the State as a whole.

The outstanding result of this cooperation between the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training and the State and local apprentice committees has been the acceptance of the principle of a written agreement between apprentice and employer as the basic requirement in establishing apprenticeship standards. This agreement must clearly define the trade to be learned and the number of years or hours to be covered by the apprenticeship, including the period of probation. It must include a schedule of the processes or operations to be learned on the job, the order in which they can best be learned, and the approximate number of hours to be devoted to acquiring skill in each branch of the trade. It must assure the apprentice related class instruction of at least 144 hours a year. The written agreement must contain a progressive wage scale to be paid the apprentice, beginning at 25 percent of the journeyman's wage and increasing at regular and stated intervals, in order to average at least 50 percent of the journeyman's wage over the whole period of apprenticeship. It constitutes a reasonable promise of continued employment on the part of the employer and safeguards the hours and conditions of work for the apprentice in conformity with accepted labor standards for the particular industry.

The local joint trade apprenticeship committees, of which about 1,200 are now in existence in the country, are the agencies through which the technique of putting apprenticeship standards into operation in a particular trade is first worked out. By means of a series of conferences separately and jointly with local employer groups and with local labor groups, field representatives of the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training work out the necessary standards for a particular trade and bring about an agreement on differences between the two groups. The next step is to expand and coordinate the local apprenticeship standards operating in a particular trade first into State standards to cover the trade within the entire State, and finally into national standards for the entire trade. Sometimes, however, the procedure may be reversed and national standards are set up first. This is done through the cooperation of the national trade association and the national or international union covering the trade. Local apprenticeship standards are then patterned after the national standards.

National apprenticeship standards were first adopted by the plumbing industry. These standards were worked out through the cooperation of the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training with workers and employers in the industry. They were then approved by the National Association of Master Plumbers, representing employers, and by the United Association of Journeymen Plumbers and Steamfitters of the United States and Canada, representing the workers in the trade. A considerable number of plumbing apprenticeship systems are now operating under national standards in widely scattered sections of the country. National standards have also been adopted by the painting, decorating, and paperhanging industry, and the services of the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training are being enlisted in working out national standards for other trades.

The growing interest in apprenticeship standards on the part of the States led to the unanimous adoption by the Third National Conference on Labor Legislation in November 1936 of a resolution requesting the Secretary of Labor to appoint a committee to draft suggested standards for State apprenticeship legislation. These standards incorporate the use of the written agreement between apprentice and employer, and include the standard provisions outlined above. The Committee also suggested the adoption of procedures for rotating apprentices from one employer to another for the purpose of providing them with greater diversity of trade preparation and greater continuity of employment. Under this procedure apprenticeship agreements may be signed by an association of employers or by an organization of employees.

PROBLEMS OF ADMINISTERING WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION LAWS

MARSHALL DAWSON
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

More than a quarter of a century has passed since the first workmen's compensation laws were enacted in the United States and Canada. Today only two States--Arkansas and Mississippi--are without such laws.

Workmen's compensation laws are designed to give an injured worker prompt medical care and money payments at the cost of the employer and at a minimum of expense to the worker. Before these laws were passed, if an injured worker sued his employer for damages he had to prove that the employer was negligent. The court remedy was slow, costly, and uncertain. Under the compensation law the question of fault or blame for the accident is not raised, since work injuries are now considered part of the cost of production. Injured workers are thus spared the difficulties and delays they had suffered under court procedure.

The workmen's compensation laws are administered by boards and commissions in all but a few States. Court administration is still found in Alabama, Louisiana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Tennessee, and Wyoming. In some States the method of settling claims is still too complicated and there are formal hearings somewhat similar to court trials.

In the more advanced administrations the settlement of compensation claims is not the only activity of the commissions, but is tied in with a program for eliminating accidents and encouraging the rehabilitation of disabled workers. A complete and effective program of dealing with industrial injuries must include--

1. Systematic and continuous endeavors by responsible authorities, employers, and workers to determine and eliminate causes of accidents.

2. Immediate and adequate medical treatment when injuries occur.

3. Prompt and equitable payment of compensation benefits.

4. A plan for rehabilitating workers who, because of their injuries, are no longer able to follow their former occupations.

No State agency administering workmen's compensation laws completely lives up to this program, although some commissions are outstanding for excellence of service. In many States activities in accident prevention and rehabilitation of permanently injured workmen have lagged because sufficient funds were not available for such work, and because the administrative agencies are inadequately staffed.

Since the first compensation laws were passed there has been a notable advance toward giving adequate medical care to injured workers. In a majority of the States, the workman often receives full medical care. In some States, however, the medical provisions are still inadequate. The quality of medical treatment is also at times unsatisfactory. This is due in part to the lack of expert supervision of medical care, since few compensation commissions have adequate medical staffs and some have no salaried medical adviser.

A number of investigations made by Federal and State agencies have revealed that workers have lost millions of dollars annually through the inexpert and unfair settlement of their claims. Only after much experience and thorough training can a State employee check intelligently upon the settlement of compensation claims. The lack of proper claim supervision, where it is found, is due to insufficient financial support of the administration and to the practice of appointing inexperienced or unqualified personnel.

As a recent Pennsylvania survey points out, "The most important part of a compensation system is not what the statutes promise, but what the administrative staff delivers." The experience of a few States and most of the Canadian Provinces indicates that satisfactory service is possible where the personnel

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is appointed and retained on the basis of qualifications. In Wisconsin, for instance, the entire staff below the rank of commissioner is selected on a merit basis. The employees remain as long as they perform their duties efficiently, and they have opportunities for advancement.

On the other hand, in no State does the merit system control board membership and in several States there may be an almost complete change of personnel after an election. This practice has been described by the president of the International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions as "nothing short of appalling.... Continuity of service in a highly technical branch such as this is absolutely essential if we are to have really efficient administration of existing laws, or the mature experience that would warrant us in endeavoring to better them." (Monthly Labor Review September 1937, p. 637.)

The record of the British Columbia Workmen's Compensation Board is unique as to the continuous service of its members. Each person appointed to that board has had experience and the qualifications especially needed in compensation administration. In the 20 years' history of that board the only change in its membership was due to the death of one of the three commissioners. The service rendered by this board has been outstanding.

Eighteen years ago the Bureau of Labor Statistics made a survey of workmen's compensation administration and reported that the principal and greatest handicaps suffered by the commissions were the "system of partisan political appointments" and "inadequate appropriations and salaries." The same is true today. As yet, there has been little demand for nonpolitical administration of workmen's compensation.

When there is an effective public demand that compensation commissioners and employees shall be selected because of their qualifications for this type of work and shall have adequate salaries and security of tenure during efficiency, a great advance in compensation administration will take place. Until that time, injured workers in some States will continue to suffer through lack of prompt and adequate attention to their needs and expert supervision of their claims.

ONE YEAR OF THE WALSH-HEALEY PUBLIC CONTRACTS ACT

By September 28, 1937 the Walsh-Healey Public Contracts Act had been in effect for one year. During those 12 months 4,575 contracts subject to the act were awarded for the purchase of commodities needed by the Government. They were valued at approximately $246,600,000.

Under the terms of the statute every Government contract amounting to $10,000 or more must carry a signed agreement by the manufacturers to abide by the basic labor standards provided in the law. These standards include the 8-hour day and the 40-hour week with an overtime rate of time and a half for all hours in excess of daily and weekly limits set by the law; no child labor under 16 for boys and under 18 for girls; no convict labor; compliance with the safety, sanitary, and factory inspection laws of the State where the contract is performed; and the payment of such minimum wages as have been determined by the Secretary of Labor to be the prevailing wage.

With the exception of minimum wages the standards provided in the act do not call for administrative determination. Surveys of the plants in a wide range of industries affected by the Walsh-Healey Public Contracts Act indicate a desire on the part of labor and management to comply with the provisions of the law and the minimum wage rates set by the Secretary of Labor. Only

in exceptional cases has there been a failure to comply through misunderstanding, ignorance, or evasion of the act. In most cases management has quickly adapted its conduct to legal requirements. Where the payment of back wages has been involved the Division of Public Contracts has been successful in securing the amounts due employees.

Minimum wages are determined by the Secretary of Labor. These are based on recommendations of the Public Contracts Board after it has received testimony from representatives of labor, manufacturers, and other interested parties, and after the Division of Public Contracts of the Department of Labor has given careful study to the wages and working conditions and the geographical location of the plants of the industry.

It has been the policy of the Secretary of Labor to concentrate on the industries where low wage scales have prevailed. Minimum wages were first established in the clothing apparel industries. Both labor and management in these industries have in the past been striving to eliminate sweatshop conditions and improve the earnings of the workers. After hearing all the evidence, the Secretary of Labor established minimum weekly and hourly rates of pay for wage earners working on Government contracts in seven apparel industries. These industries manufacture men's neckwear, men's hats and caps, men's raincoats, cotton garments and allied products, seamless hosiery, men's underwear, and work gloves. The minimum rates established range from 32½ cents per hour for operatives in the South making men's underwear to 67½ cents per hour in the men's hat and cap industry. With the exception of the hat and cap industry, special rates were set for learners, handicapped, and older employees whose output is below the average of regular workers. In all cases the regular working time is limited to 40 hours per week. Work in excess of 8 hours per day or 40 hours per week is compensated at the rate of one and one-half times the regular rate.

MINIMUM WAGES DETERMINED BY THE SECRETARY OF LABOR

INDUSTRY	WAGE RATES*	
	PER WEEK	PER HOUR
Men's neckwear, excluding knitted wear	$20.00	$0.50
Men's hat and cap	27.00	.67½
Men's raincoat -- vulcanized, rubberized, and cravenette	16.00	.40
Cotton garment and allied products**	15.00	.37½
Seamless hosiery	14.00	.35
Men's underwear -- knit and woven		
North	14.00	.35
South	13.00	.32½
Work glove -- leather, leather-palm, canvas or canton flannel, knit, woolen knit lined, and white cotton	14.00	.35

** With the exception of the hat and cap industry, special rates of pay were established for learners, handicapped, and superannuated employees whose output is below the average of regular workers.*

*** Includes* men's and youths' trousers and knickers, except those made wholly of wool; shirts and nightwear, including flannel; men's and youths' workshirts; men's youths', and boys' sleeping garments; overalls, overall jackets, and one-piece overall suits; workpants and breeches, except those made wholly of wool; work and other short coats; windbreakers and lumberjackets, excluding mackinaws and leather and sheeplined coats; oiled waterproof cotton outergarments; men's and youths' wash suits; washable service apparel (hospital, professional, etc.); blanket-lined and similar coats; and men's and youths' other cotton outerwear.

Products Purchased. The Government's need for materials and supplies ranges from structural steel and boilers, coal and gasoline, to blankets and clothing, and foodstuffs and tobacco. The continuous demand for these and hundreds of other items by various agencies of the Government keeps many workers busy in factories scattered throughout the United States. During the first year of the Public Contract's Act, the largest Government purchases subject to the act were textiles valued at $45,220,000. Nearly half the value of these contracts ($21,600,000) was for the purchase of cloth for suits and shirts. Awards for iron and steel products were valued at $20,860,000. Among the outstanding items contracted for in this group were wire and cables, structural steel, and boilers. Two hundred and seventy-two contracts aggregating $18,600,000 were awarded for the purchase of electrical machinery, and 117 contracts valued at $15,330,000, for the purchase of airplanes.

UNION AND NONUNION WAGES IN THE BUILDING TRADES, 1936

Workers in the building trades who belong to a labor union earn on the average considerably more per hour than nonunion men performing the same type of work. According to a recent Bureau of Labor Statistics survey of the hourly rates of pay of 126,000 union and 60,000 nonunion building-trades workers, the spread between union and nonunion rates in the same trade varied from a few cents to more than 50 cents per hour.

In the majority of building-trades occupations surveyed the average hourly rates for union workers were at least 20 percent higher than for nonunion workers in each region of the country and in small as well as in large cities. In the majority of those cities where substantial numbers of union and nonunion workers were reported, the union workers in the skilled and semiskilled occupations worked at hourly rates which were at least 25 percent higher than for nonunion workers. Nearly half of all union and nonunion workers (46.9 percent) included in the study received rates of $1 or more per hour and almost two-thirds received 75 cents or more per hour. About 7 out of every 8 building-trades workers earned more than 50 cents per hour.

A comparison of average hourly wage rates of union and nonunion workers employed in 12 selected building-trades occupations reveals that in each of the selected occupations union journeymen averaged more than $1 per hour and in many cases more than $1.25 per hour. With the exception of structural-iron workers, nonunion building-construction employees, on the other hand, averaged less than $1 per hour. The largest differences in hourly rates of union and nonunion workers were found among wood lathers, electricians, hoisting engineers, stonemasons, cement finishers, plasterers, and composition roofers.

The highest average hourly rate ($1.42) was earned by hoisting engineers who belonged to a trade-union. The rate for nonunion workers in this trade averaged 94 cents per hour. The lowest union hourly rate for skilled building-trades workers was paid to mixer operators--$1.04. For nonunion workers the average hourly rate on this job amounted to 67 cents.

The rates of pay of building-trades workers varied with the size of the city. Rates were highest in the large metropolitan areas, such as New York and Chicago, and as a rule were progressively lower as the size of the city decreased. Union carpenters, for example, averaged $1.27 per hour in cities of over 1,000,000 population, as against 99½ cents in cities of 50,000 to 100,000 population. The hourly rates for nonunion carpenters in the same size cities were 88 cents and 69 cents per hour respectively. Union painters had an average hourly rate of $1.18 in cities of over 1,000,000 population and 93 cents in cities of 50,000 to 100,000. Nonunion painters in the same size cities averaged respectively 79 cents and 65 cents per hour.

Common laborers—members of a trade-union--averaged 66 cents per hour in cities of over 1,000,000 population as against 53 cents per hour in cities of 50,000 to 100,000

AVERAGE HOURLY UNION AND NONUNION WAGES IN SELECTED BUILDING-TRADES OCCUPATIONS, FOR THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE, 1936*

OCCUPATION	UNION RATE	NONUNION RATE	DIFFERENCE
Bricklayers	$1.35	$0.97	$0.38
Carpenters	1.15	.80	.35
Electricians	1.36	.86	.50
Engineers, hoisting	1.42	.94	.48
Mixer operators	1.04	.67	.37
Painters	1.09	.70	.39
Plasterers	1.35	.94	.41
Plumbers	1.28	.95	.33
Sheet-metal workers	1.20	.82	.38
Steam fitters	1.30	.95	.35
Stonemasons	1.35	.87	.48
Structural-iron workers	1.40	1.11	.29

** Data cover 105 cities of varying population scattered throughout the United States.*

AVERAGE HOURLY UNION AND NONUNION WAGES IN SELECTED BUILDING-TRADES OCCUPATIONS, BY SIZE OF CITY, 1936

OCCUPATION	CITIES OF OVER 1,000,000 POPULATION		CITIES OF 500,000 TO 1,000,000 POPULATION		CITIES OF 250,000 TO 500,000 POPULATION		CITIES OF 50,000 TO 100,000 POPULATION	
	Union	Nonunion	Union	Nonunion	Union	Nonunion	Union	Nonunion
Bricklayers	$1.45	$0.97	$1.37	$1.04	$1.28	$0.92	$1.20	$0.97
Carpenters	1.27	.88	1.19	.86	1.10	.75	.99	.69
Electricians	1.54	.91	1.42	.84	1.18	.87	1.07	.80
Hodcarriers	.91	.59	.88	.82	.73	.62	.79	.50
Painters	1.18	.79	1.16	.70	1.06	.65	.93	.65
Plasterers	1.46	1.00	1.43	.89	1.25	.82	1.16	.87
Plumbers	1.38	1.03	1.34	.89	1.24	.99	1.14	.92
Structural-iron workers	1.50	1.18	1.38	1.24	1.26	1.02	1.20	.93
Common laborers	.66	.51	.66	.46	.60	.41	.53	.38

population. The average hourly rate in the same size cities for common laborers who did not belong to any union were 51 cents and 38 cents respectively.

HOURS OF WORK

The largest group of building-trades workers in 1936 was employed 8 hours a day for 5 days a week. This was the regular working time of approximately 4 out of 5 union men and nearly half of the nonunion workers. Skilled building-trades workers--members of a trade-union--generally averaged a shorter workweek than nonunion and less skilled workers. Out of every 1,000 skilled union building-trades employees--

Per week

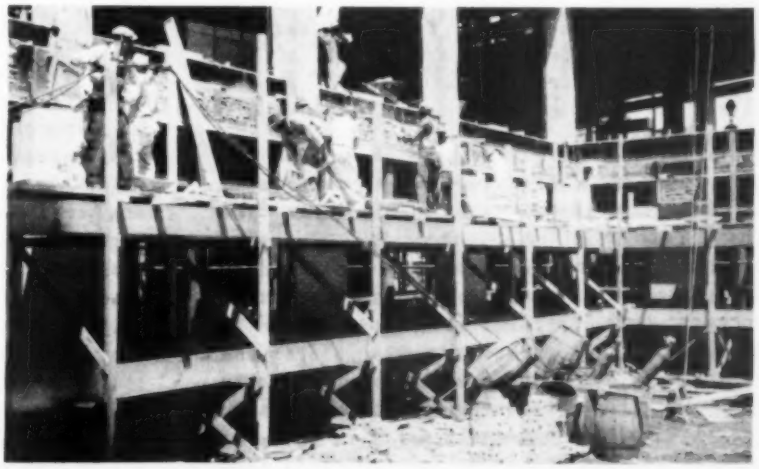
112 worked 30 hours
27 " over 30 and under 40
821 " 40 hours
40 " over 40 hours

Out of every 1,000 skilled nonunion building-trades employees--

Per week

23 worked 30 hours
6 " over 30 and under 40
361 " 40 hours
355 " 44 hours
255 " over 44 hours

The differences in the weekly hours of work among various sections of the country, as revealed by the survey, were much less marked than the differences in average hourly wage rates. In the South the weekly working time of both union and nonunion building-trades employees was slightly longer than in any of the other sections of the country. In the Mountain and Pacific States a 30-hour workweek for workers belonging to a labor union was not uncommon. In Seattle workers in the building trades have operated for several years on a 6-hour day and a 5-day week.



AT WORK ON A CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

WHY WORKERS OBJECT TO HOUSEHOLD EMPLOYMENT

MARY V. ROBINSON
WOMEN'S BUREAU. U. S. DEPT. OF LABOR

Domestic service in private homes is the most unstandardized of all occupations for women. It is unstandardized as to job performances, training facilities, wages and hours, and working conditions. In most other occupational fields considerable effort has been made through legislation, trade-union organization, and public opinion to protect women from exploitation, but practically no safeguards have been set up to guarantee household employees any limit to their hours of work, a bottom to their wages, or regulations as to places or policies of employment.

The most likely source of employment for untrained women is a job in a store, laundry, telephone exchange, hotel, restaurant, or in private domestic service. They are apt to strike household employment off the list as the least desirable, despite the realization that domestic service may be more interesting and give opportunity for more varied skills than, for example, factory work. Yet most applicants will choose a job in a factory in preference to one in a private home. Why? Because they know that in factory work they will be shown exactly what they have to do and how to do it, with little likelihood of being called on to perform additional tasks. In private domestic work, on the other hand, they face considerable uncertainty as to the exact nature of the job and the strong possibility of having extra duties imposed upon them suddenly and unexpectedly.

Their real objection to the occupation of domestic servant is based on the time that must be given to the job. The hours on duty in many instances are increased by the living-in system, whereby household workers have to live at their place of employment. This practice, which places the employee on call for evening work and greatly restricts her freedom and leisure, still persists to a considerable extent.

Hours of actual labor are unusually long for most household employees. In many instances they range from 65 to 70 hours or more a week. As a rule the hours are also indefinite. Although the worker is expected to arrive at a set time in the morning, her hour for leaving in many homes is uncertain. She may go when she finishes her work, but all sorts of unexpected things may happen to delay her departure, such as company for dinner, or the tardiness of members of the family in partaking of the evening meal.

In contrast with these excessively long hours are the regular schedules in stores, factories, laundries, telephone exchanges, hotels, and restaurants, where the exact time for arrival and departure is often indicated by a bell or whistle. Moreover, except in some hotels and restaurants, the hours in these business enterprises are generally much shorter than in private domestic service. In many concerns the schedule consists of the 8-hour day and 48-hour week or less, due to legal requirements in some States. Because of the growing tendency to shorten working hours in industry and business, many women in these fields now have a 40-hour week or even shorter. For example, as a result of union activities the 35-hour week is in force in most of the factories in the dress and coat and suit industries.

In industrial and business establishments women may be called on to work overtime, but if such practice is frequent, they are generally paid for the extra work and frequently at a higher rate. Household employees who are so often called on to stay past their regular leaving time more likely than not receive no additional pay. In all but four States the hours of women in some industries or occupations are regulated by law, but only one State, Washington, has legislation covering household employees. In this State their hours have recently been limited to 60 a week.

The number of days of rest from the job is also of vital importance to the worker. In industry or business women are almost

certain to have at least one day of rest a week. In many establishments they have a day and a half off, while in some industries the 5-day week is now the custom. In household employment the general practice is to allow a domestic worker one or two half days off each week, but such an arrangement is not as satisfactory to the worker as one whole day. On such holidays as Christmas, Thanksgiving, New Year's, Fourth of July, Labor Day, etc., a factory or store employee is sure of being off from her job, whereas the average household employee knows that not only will she be expected to work for at least half of the holiday, but she will probably have to work harder because of preparations for and celebration of the day.

The question of wages is too complicated to determine whether a woman may hope to earn more or less in domestic employment than in other types of work, as domestic workers receive part of their remuneration in the form of meals and often also of lodging. Wages of household workers fell sharply during the depression and have not recovered so rapidly as in some other fields. Most of the minimum-wage laws which have been recently enacted have definitely exempted household workers. To date only one State, Wisconsin, has established minimum rates of pay for woman domestics in private homes.

In contrast with employment policies in virtually all other fields employing women, skill and experience are often completely disregarded in setting wages for household workers. There is a decided tendency to pay private domestic workers the so-called prevailing wage, irrespective of whether they are skilled, only fairly so, or more or less untrained. Unless a domestic worker is a specialist in a particular line and can secure a job as one of a corps of workers with a well-to-do employer, she can rarely hope to rise above a discouraging low wage level.

Another serious drawback to household employment is the lack of protection against accidents and diseases incurred in the line of duty, in spite of the fact that statistics reveal a high rate of accidents in homes. Although all but two States have workmen's compensation laws, household workers are generally not protected by this form of legislation. They are also specifically exempt from the social-security features of unemployment compensation and old-age benefits which constitute economic safeguards to workers in most other occupations.

Apart from the economic problems there are certain social aspects that make household employment less desirable than other types of jobs. Household workers feel that the employer-employee relationship in a private home is too close, and that their lives are too minutely regulated by their employers. They lack contact with other workers and in some cases they must contend with loneliness and isolation when employed in out-of-the-way places. Unfortunately also public opinion is still prone to attach a social stigma to this form of service, thus making it repugnant to many American women.

In view of these disadvantages, it is little wonder that many women today prefer most other kinds of jobs to those in private homes. The applicants for household employment include few who really choose this field, but consist largely of the "left-overs" from other types of work -- those who for various reasons (race, age, prejudice, and so on) are unable to secure industrial or business jobs and are driven by need to apply for domestic service. A large number of these persons cannot be placed, or at least permanently placed, in household employment because they are not really qualified for it. Employment records have exploded very definitely the theory that any woman can do domestic service satisfactorily. If properly trained, however, many who have been rejected as unsuitable household employees could meet with success in such service in the future. Unfortunately, in this country there has been a great dearth of adequate training facilities for work in this field. Even where effort is being made to correct this lack and opportunities are being offered to women for training, many of the most acceptable recruits refuse to prepare themselves for a type of employment characterized by so many disadvantages.

EMPLOYMENT AND PAY ROLLS IN AUGUST 1937

Approximately 43,000 additional workers were provided jobs in August in the combined 89 manufacturing and 16 nonmanufacturing industries surveyed each month by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The total weekly wage income of the workers employed in these industries rose $8,400,000.

The number of workers employed in manufacturing industries in August advanced by nearly 68,000. The gain in employment of 103,000 workers in nondurable-goods manufacturing was offset in part by a loss of approximately 35,000 workers in the durable-goods industries. Weekly pay rolls, however, increased in both the durable- and nondurable-goods groups and aggregated nearly $7,000,000 more than in July.

Employment advanced in 9 of the 16 nonmanufacturing industries in August. The largest gain occurred in bituminous coal mining, where approximately 14,000 miners were returned to work. Retail trade, on the other hand, employed about 50,000 fewer workers than in the preceding month. As a result, the nonmanufacturing group of industries as a whole suffered a net decline in employment of about 25,000 workers.

Over the 12-month interval, August 1936 to August 1937, about 1,100,000 workers were added to the pay rolls of the combined manufacturing and nonmanufacturing industries. Weekly wage disbursements to the workers employed increased $64,100,000.

MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

Gains in the number of workers employed were reported in 47 of the 89 manufacturing industries. The largest increases in employment were due principally to seasonal factors. Employment rose 36 percent in millinery, 35 percent in beet sugar, 33 percent in canning and preserving, 26 percent in cottonseed--oil, cake, and meal, and 24 percent in women's clothing. Resumption of operations following July shutdowns largely accounted for employment gains of 25 percent in rubber boots and shoes and more than 10 percent in clocks and watches. Smaller increases were noted in such important industries as blast furnaces, steel works and rolling mills, shipbuilding, and cigars and cigarettes.

The outstanding decline in employment from July to August occurred in the automobile industry. It amounted to slightly more than 8 percent and was due largely to temporary plant shutdowns in connection with changes in models.

DURABLE-GOODS INDUSTRIES

Employment. Reductions in employment of about 44,500 workers in transportation equipment--largely automobiles--and 8,700 in railroad repair shops were more than sufficient to offset the employment gains of 11,200 in iron and steel, 4,800 in nonferrous metals, 1,000 in stone, clay, and glass, and 900 in machinery manufacturing. As a result approximately 35,300 fewer workers had jobs in the durable-goods industries in August as compared with July.

Over the 12-month period, however, 581,100 persons were added to the pay rolls of industries manufacturing durable goods. Employment gains were registered in all groups and were distributed as follows:

226,700 in machinery manufacturing
116,900 in iron and steel
107,000 in transportation equipment
57,300 in lumber
41,800 in nonferrous metals
17,400 in railroad repair shops
14,000 in stone, clay, and glass

Weekly Pay Rolls. With the exception of a decline of $740,000 in weekly wage disbursements to workers in transportation equipment industries, all durable-goods groups of industries reported higher pay

ESTIMATED EMPLOYMENT AND PAY ROLLS IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

AUGUST 1937, JULY 1937, and AUGUST 1936

INDUSTRY	NUMBER OF WORKERS EMPLOYED			AMOUNT OF WEEKLY PAY ROLL		
	AUGUST 1937*	JULY 1937‡	AUGUST 1936	AUGUST 1937*	JULY 1937‡	AUGUST 1936
All industries	8,561,900	8,494,300	7,826,900	$210,795,000	$204,110,000	$169,809,000
Durable-goods groups:	*4,252,200*	*4,287,500*	*3,671,100*	*118,445,000*	*114,566,000*	*87,580,000*
Iron and steel	935,600	924,400	818,700	29,738,000	27,987,000	21,403,000
Machinery	1,151,200	1,150,300	924,500	32,814,000	31,837,000	22,376,000
Transportation equipment	631,100	675,600	524,100	19,486,000	20,226,000	13,943,000
Railroad repair shops	298,900	307,600	281,500	9,074,000	8,613,000	7,826,000
Nonferrous metals	319,900	315,100	278,100	8,033,000	7,717,000	6,076,000
Lumber	663,300	663,300	606,000	13,032,000	12,318,000	10,780,000
Stone, clay, and glass	252,200	251,200	238,200	6,268,000	5,868,000	5,176,000
Nondurable-goods groups:	*4,309,700*	*4,206,800*	*4,155,800*	*92,350,000*	*89,544,000*	*82,229,000*
Textiles	1,673,400	1,629,400	1,658,700	28,857,000	27,083,000	27,685,000
Leather	311,900	311,500	305,400	5,812,000	5,910,000	5,610,000
Foods	880,800	830,100	850,100	19,899,000	19,468,000	17,290,000
Tobacco	85,500	83,900	87,200	1,264,000	1,242,000	1,190,000
Paper and printing	564,600	563,000	531,600	15,251,000	15,103,000	13,289,000
Chemicals	414,000	412,000	375,700	11,690,000	11,337,000	8,959,000
Rubber	131,200	129,200	123,800	3,343,000	3,357,000	3,149,000
Unclassified	248,300	247,700	223,300	6,234,000	6,044,000	5,057,000

* *Preliminary* ‡ *Revised*

rolls in August. The gains in the weekly wages of the workers employed ranged from $316,000 in nonferrous metals and $461,000 in railroad repair shops to $977,000 in machinery manufacturing and $1,750,000 in iron and steel.

Wage earners engaged in manufacturing durable-goods products received nearly $30,900,000 more in weekly wages this August than a year ago. The increases amounted to $10,438,000 in machinery manufacturing, $8,335,000 in iron and steel, $5,543,000 in transportation equipment, $2,252,000 in lumber, $1,957,000 in nonferrous metals, $1,248,000 in railroad repair shops, and $1,092,000 in stone, clay, and glass.

NONDURABLE-GOODS INDUSTRIES

Employment. All nondurable-goods groups of industries reported employment gains in August. The outstanding increases occurred in foodstuffs (50,700) and textiles (44,000). The other gains in employment ranged from 400 in leather products to 2,000 each in chemicals and rubber.

Over the year interval, August 1936 to August 1937, nearly 154,000 wage earners were added to the pay rolls of nondurable-goods industries. The largest gains were the addition of 38,300 workers in chemicals, 33,000 in paper and printing, and 30,700 in foodstuffs. Tobacco manufacturing employed

approximately 1,700 fewer workers than in August a year ago.

Weekly Pay Rolls. The total weekly wage income of workers employed in nondurable-goods industries rose $2,800,000 in August. The textile group of industries registered the greatest increase. It amounted to $1,770,000. Smaller gains were reported in all but two of the remaining nondurable-goods groups. Pay rolls declined $98,000 in leather and $14,000 in rubber.

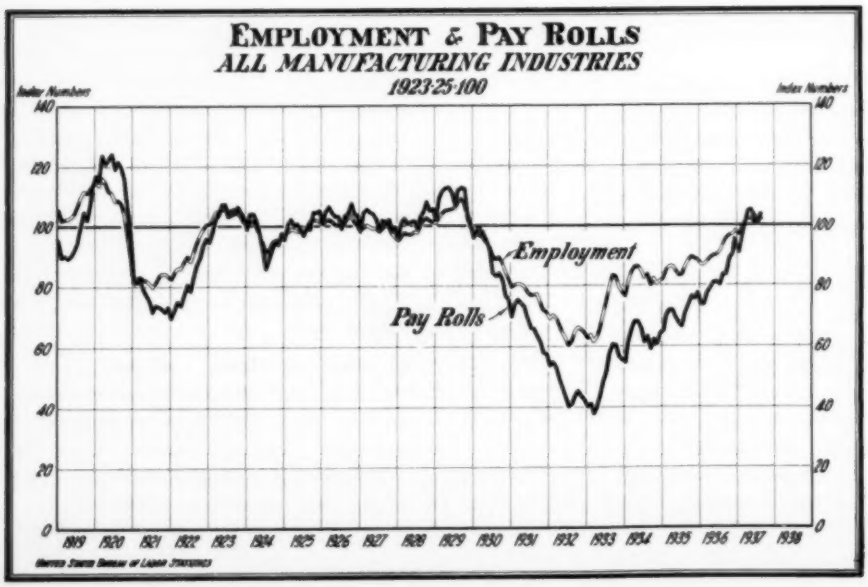
Approximately $10,100,000 more was paid out in wages to workers in the nondurable-goods industries this August than in August a year ago. The increases over the year interval affected all groups and amounted to $2,731,000 in chemicals, $2,609,000 in food-stuffs, $1,962,000 in paper and printing, $1,172,000 in textiles, $202,000 in leather, $194,000 in rubber, $74,000 in tobacco, and $1,177,000 in the unclassified group of nondurable-goods industries.

TREND OF EMPLOYMENT AND PAY ROLLS IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

Factory employment advanced slightly in August. It was more than 9 percent above August a year ago. Weekly pay-roll disbursements to workers employed in manufacturing industries rose more than 3 percent over the month interval July to August. They were 24 percent higher than in August 1936.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics index of employment was 102.2 in August, as against 101.4 in the preceding month, 93.5 in August of last year, and 100 as the average for the 3 years 1923-25. In other words, for every 1,000 factory workers with jobs during 1923-25, 1,022 were employed this August, 1,014 in July, and 935 in August of last year.

The pay-roll index of the Bureau was 103.7 in August, 100.4 in July, 83.5 in August 1936, and 100 for 1923-25. This means that for every $1,000 disbursed in wages to workers, manufacturing industries paid out $1,037 in August, $1,004 in July, and $835 in August a year ago.



BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

Factory Employment Index

1923-25 = 100

1937	
AUGUST.....	102.2*
July.....	101.4
June.....	101.1
May.....	102.3
April.....	102.1
March.....	101.1
February...	99.0
January....	96.5
1936	
December...	98.1
November...	96.9
October....	96.7
September..	95.5
August.....	93.5

* *Preliminary*

HOURS OF WORK AND EARNINGS IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

Employment in manufacturing industries in August averaged 38.5 hours per week -- about one-half hour per week less than in August 1936. Average hourly earnings were nearly 66 cents -- almost 9 cents per hour more than in August of last year. Weekly earnings of factory workers averaged $25.85 in August. This was about 65 cents per week more than in July and $3.15 per week more than in August a year ago.

Weekly earnings:

$34.75 in blast furnaces and rolling mills
32.10 in automobiles
29.20 in foundries and machine shops
22.70 in sawmills
21.75 in brick manufacturing

Average weekly hours of work and average hourly and weekly earnings in the five selected nondurable-goods industries in August 1937 were:

HOURS OF WORK AND EARNINGS IN THE IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY

INDUSTRY	HOURS OF WORK			HOURLY EARNINGS			WEEKLY EARNINGS		
	AUGUST 1937	INCREASE OR DECREASE: JULY 1937 TO AUGUST 1937	INCREASE OR DECREASE: AUGUST 1936 TO AUGUST 1937	AUGUST 1937	INCREASE OR DECREASE: JULY 1937 TO AUGUST 1937	INCREASE OR DECREASE: AUGUST 1936 TO AUGUST 1937	AUGUST 1937	INCREASE OR DECREASE: JULY 1937 TO AUGUST 1937	INCREASE OR DECREASE: AUGUST 1936 TO AUGUST 1937
		Percent	*Percent*	*Cents*	*Percent*	*Percent*		*Percent*	*Percent*
Blast furnaces.	40.5	+ 6.0	- 2.8	86.0	+ 0.3	+28.9	$34.75	+ 6.2	+26.4
Bolts, nuts, rivets . .	39.5	+ 8.5	- 2.0	67.5	+ 0.9	+16.5	26.50	+ 8.9	+13.5
Cast-iron pipe	37.0	+ 1.9	- 5.8	57.0	+ 0.1	+15.8	21.30	+ 2.1	+10.0
Cutlery and edge tools.	41.0	+ 3.4	- 2.7	60.0	- 0.2	+ 9.4	24.10	+ 2.8	+ 7.0
Forgings, iron and steel	40.0	+ 3.6	+ 2.2	72.0	+ 2.1	+11.5	28.60	+ 6.1	+13.8
Hardware	38.5	+ 1.8	- 1.0	67.5	- 1.8	+24.4	26.00	*no change*	+23.1
Plumbers' supplies . .	39.5	+ 3.2	- 1.2	65.0	+ 2.1	+15.2	25.85	+ 5.3	+13.7
Steam heating apparatus	39.0	+ 0.2	- 9.0	69.0	+ 1.5	+19.2	27.10	+ 1.8	+ 8.4
Stoves	39.5	+ 6.4	- 3.2	64.5	+ 3.1	+ 7.2	25.30	+ 9.5	+ 3.4
Structural metal work .	41.5	+ 2.4	*no change*	70.5	- 0.2	+19.3	29.20	+ 2.2	+19.3
Tin cans	41.0	+ 3.5	- 1.1	59.0	- 0.7	+11.1	24.30	+ 2.9	+ 9.6
Tools	40.0	+ 0.2	- 5.0	61.5	+ 0.6	+13.3	24.80	+ 0.8	+ 7.6
Wirework	34.5	- 5.3	- 8.7	68.5	+ 1.6	+26.0	23.45	- 3.9	+15.0

In the five selected durable-goods industries the average weekly hours and average hourly and weekly earnings in August 1937 were:

Weekly hours:
42.5 in sawmills
42.0 in foundries and machine shops
41.0 in brick manufacturing
40.5 in blast furnaces and rolling mills
35.0 in automobiles

Hourly earnings (in cents):
92.0 in automobiles
86.0 in blast furnaces and rolling mills
69.5 in foundries and machine shops
54.0 in sawmills
53.0 in brick manufacturing

Weekly hours:
41.5 in paper and pulp
40.0 in slaughtering and meat packing
37.0 in petroleum refining
35.5 in cotton-goods manufacturing
31.0 in tires and inner tubes

Hourly earnings (in cents):
97.0 in petroleum refining
96.5 in tires and inner tubes
69.5 in slaughtering and meat packing
62.5 in paper and pulp
42.5 in cotton-goods manufacturing

Weekly earnings:
$35.55 in petroleum refining
29.55 in tires and inner tubes
28.00 in slaughtering and meat packing
25.95 in paper and pulp
15.20 in cotton-goods manufacturing

Six of the 10 selected durable- and nondurable-goods industries reported a shorter workweek this August than in August a year ago. The sharpest decline in the average weekly hours of employment (about 13 percent) was recorded in tires and inner tubes, and the greatest increase (nearly 6 percent) occurred in petroleum refining.

With the exception of tires and inner tubes, all selected industries reported higher average weekly wages in August 1937 than in August 1936. The outstanding increases were 26 percent in blast furnaces, 24 percent in petroleum refining, 17 percent in paper and pulp, and 16 percent in foundries and slaughtering and meat packing.

EMPLOYMENT, PAY ROLLS, WAGES, AND HOURS IN SELECTED NONMANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

	AUGUST 1937*	INCREASE OR DECREASE: JULY 1937 TO AUGUST 1937	INCREASE OR DECREASE: AUGUST 1936 TO AUGUST 1937
RETAIL TRADE		*Percent*	*Percent*
Employment.....	3,378,100	- 1.6	+ 4.6
Weekly pay roll...	$66,334,000	- 0.7	+12.3
Weekly hours.....	43.5	+ 0.4	- 0.7
Hourly earnings...	$0.57	+ 0.1	+ 7.6
Weekly earnings...	$23.00	+ 0.9	+ 7.2
WHOLESALE TRADE			
Employment.....	1,473,400	+ 1.3	+ 6.3
Weekly pay roll...	$45,731,000	+ 2.7	+13.4
Weekly hours.....	43.5	+ 0.7	+ 1.3
Hourly earnings...	$0.72	+ 0.8	+ 6.1
Weekly earnings...	$31.30	+ 1.3	+ 6.6
METAL MINING			
Employment.....	91,700	+ 1.8	+35.4
Weekly pay rolls..	$2,722,000	+ 6.7	+72.2
Weekly hours.....	44.5	+ 4.6	+ 8.6
Hourly earnings...	$0.71	+ 0.1	+17.7
Weekly earnings...	$31.60	+ 4.8	+27.2
BITUMINOUS COAL			
Employment.....	361,500	+ 3.9	+ 2.6
Weekly pay roll...	$8,158,000	+11.1	+12.8
Weekly hours.....	26.5	+ 6.5	- 3.1
Hourly earnings...	$0.90	+ 1.3	+12.0
Weekly earnings...	$23.55	+ 6.8	+10.0
TELEPHONE & TELEGRAPH			
Employment.....	427,700	+ 0.1	+ 8.6
Weekly hours.....	$13,318,000	*No change*	+13.5
Hourly earnings	39.0	- 1.2	- 3.3
Hourly earnings...	$0.83	+ 1.1	+ 8.4
Weekly earnings...	$30.95	- 0.1	+ 4.5

	AUGUST 1937*	INCREASE OR DECREASE: JULY 1937 TO AUGUST 1937	INCREASE OR DECREASE: AUGUST 1936 TO AUGUST 1937
HOTELS		*Percent*	*Percent*
Employment.....	251,700	+ 0.5	+ 4.0
Weekly pay roll..	$3,658,000	+ 1.0	+12.0
Weekly hours.....	47.5	- 0.4	+ 0.1
Hourly earnings..	$0.31	+ 0.7	+ 7.8
Weekly earnings..	$14.85	+ 0.5	+ 7.7
POWER and LIGHT			
Employment.....	313,900	+ 0.9	+ 5.4
Weekly pay roll..	$9,725,000	+ 0.4	+14.0
Weekly hours.....	39.5	- 1.4	- 1.1
Hourly earnings..	$0.86	+ 0.9	+11.2
Weekly earnings..	$33.65	- 0.5	+ 8.1
ELECTRIC RAILROADS			
Employment.....	196,000	*No change*	+ 1.4
Weekly pay rolls.	$6,252,000	+ 3.2	+ 9.9
Weekly hours.....	47.0	+ 2.6	+ 2.9
Hourly earnings..	$0.69	+ 0.6	+ 5.9
Weekly earnings..	$32.70	+ 3.3	+ 8.4
LAUNDRIES			
Employment.....	219,700	- 1.0	+ 5.2
Weekly pay roll..	$3,785,000	- 1.1	+12.2
Weekly hours.....	43.5	- 1.0	+ 0.3
Hourly earnings..	$0.40	+ 0.9	+ 6.2
Weekly earnings..	$17.15	- 0.1	+ 6.7
DYEING & CLEANING			
Employment.....	50,200	- 1.2	+ 1.7
Weekly pay roll..	$1,007,000	+ 1.6	+ 9.2
Weekly hours.....	43.0	+ 1.0	- 0.3
Hourly earnings..	$0.47	+ 1.5	+ 6.2
Weekly earnings..	$20.25	+ 2.8	+ 7.4

* *Preliminary*

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN AUGUST 1937

AGRICULTURE

Farm Income. The cash income of farmers from the sale of farm products in August was approximately $26,000,000 larger than in July and $131,000,000 larger than in August a year ago. Estimates of the Department of Agriculture indicate that the cash income from farm marketings totaled $766,000,000 in August, $740,000,000 in the preceding month, and $635,000,000 in August 1936.

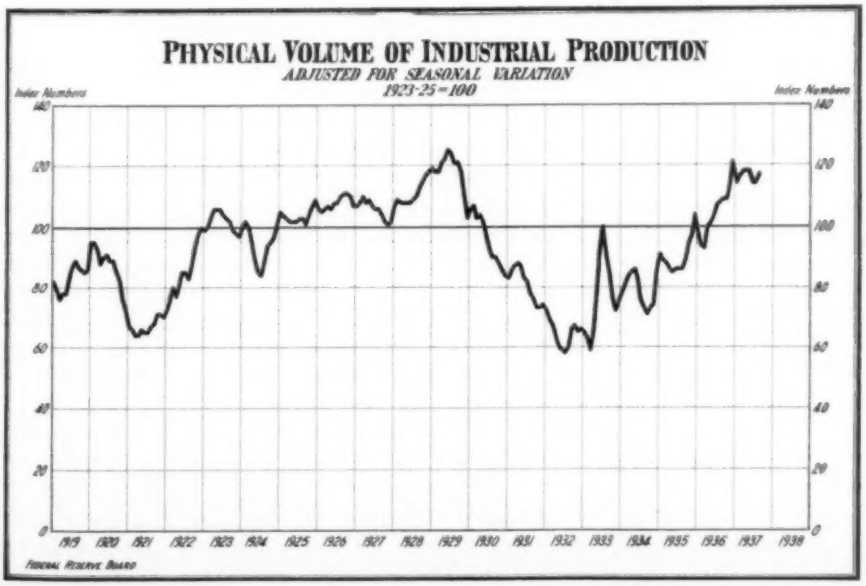
In addition, Government payments to farmers in August under the agricultural conservation program amounted to $5,000,000. In the previous month and in August a year ago farmers received $11,000,000.

INDUSTRY AND TRADE

The volume of industrial production in August was about 3 percent larger than in July and 8 percent larger than in August a year ago. The Federal Reserve Board's adjusted index of industrial production which makes allowance for seasonal changes in the output of goods rose to 117 in August, compared with 114 in the preceding month, 108 in August 1936, and 100 as the average for the 3-year period 1923-25.

Among the durable-goods industries steel mills reported a further gain in output, while automobile assemblies were maintained at a considerably higher level than is usual in the month before the production of new models. Among the nondurable-goods industries cotton and woolen textiles and meat packing establishments recorded a gain in activity. The output of boots and shoes also advanced, but the increase was not as large as is usual for this season of the year.

Mail-order and department store sales picked up, but the increase in sales was not as great as normally expected for August.



FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD
Industrial Production

ADJUSTED INDEX
1923-25 = 100

1937	
AUGUST.....	117*
July.....	114
June.....	114
May.....	118
April.....	118
March.....	118
February...	116
January....	114
1936	
December...	121
November...	114
October....	110
September..	109
August.....	108

* Preliminary

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL BAROMETERS

Automobiles. About 44,600 fewer passenger cars and trucks were assembled in August than in the preceding month. Total production aggregated 394,300 units in August, as against nearly 439,000 in July and 271,300 in August of last year.

Bituminous Coal. August output of bituminous coal totaled nearly 34,000,000 tons -- 3,075,000 tons more than in July and approximately 900,000 tons more than in August a year ago.

Building Construction. The value of building construction for which permits were issued in 1,456 cities in August amounted to $139,600,000 compared with $132,300,000 in July and $144,900,000 in August 1936.

Electric Power. Slightly more than 10,300 million kilowatt hours of electricity were produced in August, as against 10,100 million kilowatt hours in July and 9,800 million kilowatt hours in August a year ago.

Railroad Freight Car Loadings. Class I railroads loaded on the average 778,900 cars of freight per week in August. This was approximately 16,500 cars per week more than in the preceding month and 40,300 cars per week more than in August 1936.

Steel. Output of steel ingots in August totaled 4,860,000 tons, compared with 4,560,000 tons in July and nearly 4,200,000 tons in August of last year.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT AND RELIEF IN AUGUST 1937

Employment in the Federal Service. The regular Federal Government service employed about 1,135,000 persons in August. Of this number 803,300 were employed in the executive branch, 325,100 in the military service, 5,200 in the legislative, and approximately 1,900 in the judicial service.

P.W.A. Construction Projects. Slightly more than 187,800 workers were employed at the site of construction on projects directed by the Public Works Administration in August, as against 198,500 in the preceding month. The total wage income of the workers employed amounted to $15,400,000 in August, compared with $16,250,000 in July.

Other Federal Government Construction Projects. Construction projects financed by regular appropriations and by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation provided employment for 208,200 persons in August at a total pay roll of $20,160,000. In the preceding month about 197,800 workers received $20,170,000 in wages.

The Works Program. About 1,940,000 persons had jobs in August on projects financed by the Works Progress Administration other than emergency conservation work and that part of P.W.A. financed by The Works Program. Workers employed on these projects earned approximately $96,950,000 in wages during the month.

Emergency Conservation Work. Nearly 327,400 enrolled workers, camp supervisors and instructors were employed in the Civilian Conservation Corps in August, compared with 348,800 in July. Their wages aggregated $16,400,000 in August, as against $16,850,000 in the preceding month.

General Relief. Preliminary reports received by the Social Security Board from 90 urban areas indicate that nearly 669,100 families and single persons received $19,940,000 in emergency relief from public funds in August. In the preceding month the same urban areas reported 651,800 families and single persons receiving $19,300,000.

WHAT HAPPENED TO PRICES IN AUGUST 1937

Wholesale Prices. The general level of wholesale commodity prices declined slightly in August. It was about 7 percent higher than in August 1936. The Bureau of Labor Statistics index of wholesale commodity prices stood at 87.5 in August, as against 87.9 in the preceding month, 81.6 in August of last year, and 100 in 1926. This means that the same commodities which could be bought at wholesale for $100 in 1926 cost $87.50 in August, $87.90 in July, and $81.60 in August a year ago.

INDEX OF WHOLESALE PRICES

ITEM	1926	AUGUST 1937	AUGUST 1936	INCREASE (+) OR DECREASE (−) AUGUST 1936 TO AUGUST 1937
	Index	*Index*	*Index*	*Percent*
All commodities	100	87.5	81.6	+ 7.2
Farm products	100	86.4	83.8	+ 3.1
Raw materials	100	84.8	81.5	+ 4.0
Semimanufactured articles	100	86.6	75.6	+14.6
Finished products	100	89.0	82.4	+ 8.0

Retail Food Prices. The retail food price index of the Bureau of Labor Statistics was slightly lower in August than in the preceding month but was nearly 2 percent higher than in August a year ago. The index, which includes retail prices of 84 food products sold in 51 cities, was 78.8 in August, compared with 79.2 in July, 77.4 in August 1936, and 100 in 1926. Thus, for every dollar's worth of foodstuffs purchased in the country's retail markets in 1926, consumers paid on the average 78.8 cents in August, 79.2 cents in the preceding month, and 77.4 cents in August 1936.

AVERAGE RETAIL FOOD PRICES FOR THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE

ITEM	RETAIL PRICE		INCREASE (+) OR DECREASE (−) AUGUST 1936 TO AUGUST 1937	
	AUGUST 1937	AUGUST 1936		
	Cents	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Percent*
Bread, pound	8.9	8.2	+ 0.7	+ 8.9
Butter, pound	38.8	42.5	- 3.7	- 8.5
Milk, quart	12.5	12.2	+ 0.3	+ 2.4
Eggs, dozen	37.1	39.1	- 2.0	- 4.1
Potatoes, pound	2.0	3.6	- 1.6	-43.2
Lard, pound	17.5	16.1	+ 1.4	+ 8.4
Pork chops, pound	44.0	35.7	+ 8.3	+23.3
Round steak, pound	44.6	34.7	+ 9.9	+28.5
Sugar, pound	5.5	5.7	- 0.2	- 2.8
Coffee, pound	26.0	24.2	+ 1.8	+ 7.2

Published under authority of Public Resolution No. 57, approved May 11, 1922 (42 Stat. 541), as amended by section 307 Public Act 212, approved June 30, 1932 (47 Stat. 409). This publication approved by the Director, Bureau of the Budget, September 18, 1934, as amended February 16, 1935.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1937